



State of Wyoming Military Department Office of the Adjutant General

*5500 Bishop Boulevard
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82009-3320
<http://wyoguard.state.wy.us>*

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For immediate release

Media contact:

Deidre Forster (307) 772-5253; cell (307) 631-4153; email deidre.forster@wy.ngb.army.mil.
Master Sgt. Trudy Woodcock, (307) 772-5229; email trudy.woodcock@wy.ngb.army.mil.
Staff Sgt. Tim Marquez, (307) 772-5040; email tim.marquez@wy.ngb.army.mil.

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Wyoming Air National Guard MAFFS units activated

CHEYENNE – The Wyoming Air National Guard is deploying approximately 31 personnel and two C-130s equipped with the Modular Airborne Fire Fighting System to Idaho to fight regional wild fires.

The C-130's crews will operate from the National Interagency Firefighting Center in Boise, Idaho, while deployed. The U.S. Forest Service will direct the operation of the crews.

Lt. Col. Michael Exstrom, 153rd Operations Group MAFFS coordinator, said the crews have few details about the fire situation. "We'll know more when we arrive Wednesday, but we typically don't get called to fight fires until a situation escalates."

On July 18, the NIFC increased the national preparedness level to 3. Twenty-five new large fires occurred over the weekend of July 16 -17. Thirteen of these fires are uncontained. Additionally, all 12 of the heavy lift tankers contracted by NIFC are fully committed.

NIFC activates the National Guard and Reserve MAFFS units when other fire fighting resources are exhausted.

The Wyoming Air National Guard is one of four National Guard and Reserve units in the country trained to operate the MAFFS units. Each MAFFS unit can drop 3,000 gallons of fire retardant in 8 – 10 seconds.

Exstrom said the Wyoming Air National Guard has performed its MAFFS mission for more than 30 years. Last year the unit was activated once, in July, to fight fires in Arizona.